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THE WASHINGTON POST 26 June 1978



George Bush, former director of the CIA, said in Virginia Beach Saturday he will assess his "winability" and make an early decision whether to seek the 1980 Republican presidential nomination.

He made the statement at a news conference before addressing the Virginia State Bar at a banquet that ended a three-day meeting there. Bush, a wealthy Texas businessman who has held no public office since January 1977, has said recently that he would like President Carter's job.

Someone who is an outsider like me would have to move early" in deciding whether to seek the GOP presidential nomination, Bush said Saturday. He did not pinpoint when the decision would come.

"I'm no great front-runner," he said, adding that he is traveling around the country helping Republican office-seekers. "It's a low-profile effort now."

No fewer than six people have come to top jobs at the Department of Energy from the Central Intelligence Agency but maybe now the trend will be reversed. Fred Hitz, who has been congressional liaison for DOE on Capitol Hill, is about to take a similar job at the CIA, where it pays more and carries a higher title. One reason Hitzeis leaving DOE for the CIA is that Congress is in the process of writing new charter legislation for the intelligence community and Hitz wants to be in on it. Though Hitz came to DOE from the Pentagon with Energy Secretary James Schlesinger Jr., he worked for the CIA during the '60s.